

REMARKS

Claim 11 has been objected to as being a duplicate. Claim 11 has been canceled.

The Examiner states that Applicant can not rely on the foreign priority since the translation of papers has not been made of record. Applicants respectfully submit that the Certified Priority documents and associated translation were filed on May 17, 2001, as indicated on the attached copies of the stamped postcard, cover of the certified priority document and associated transmittal documents.

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Marron in view of Koshizaka. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The priority date for the instant application (May 19, 2000) is prior to the effective filing date of the Koshizaka reference (December 17, 2002). Hence, the Koshizaka reference is not prior art. As indicated above, the certified priority documents was appropriately filed. Hence, the Examiner is kindly requested to withdraw the reference.

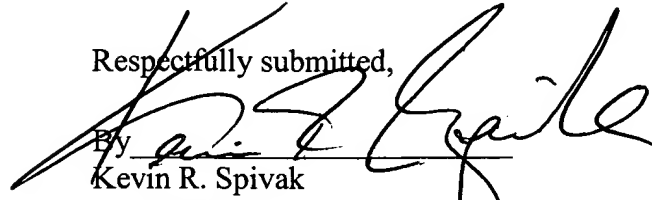
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 449122005400.

However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: August 23, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. R. Spivak", is written over a horizontal line.

By
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